RNA FOR A BETTER LIFE IN THE HEIGHTS

RIVERVIEW Neighborhood Association

December- January, 1992-93

232 Ogden Avenue - Jersey City, N.J. 07307 - (201) 798-0493

RNA IS NOT AFFILIATED WITH ANY POLITICAL PARTY, ORGANIZATION OR ELECTED OFFICIAL

View from the Chair

Well, we are almost at the close of another year. A year that has seen many changes in our City as well as our country. Once again we realize that it is important for us to be informed and to get involved. We cannot sit back and expect our world to care for itself.

Our lives and our neighborhoods are affected by how many of us participate and the ways in which we do so. Being a part of your neighborhood association is a spendid way to help make a difference.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank all our members for their faithful attendance at meetings and their support of our projects. On behalf of the executive committee I extend best wishes to all for **a Merry Christmas, a Happy and Healthy New Year and a Joyous Holiday Season.** We look forward to seeing and working with all of you again - for the betterment of our neighborhood, and our City - in 1993.

Maria Tuzzo, Chair

HARBOR VIEW HOLIDAY PARTY

Remember that the date for this year's Holiday Party for the residents of the Harbor View Health Care Center is **Thursday, December 17th from 1 to 3 pm.** Volunteers are needed to serve refreshments and help entertain our neighbors who live at the Harbor View.

As usual, we will have live entertainment with music and song. Donations of dietetic baked goods are needed for the residents. If you can help in anyway, please attend the December 8th meeting to assist in the planning. If you are unable to attend, but would like to contribute, please call 659-2245 after 6 p.m.

RNA HOLIDAY PARTY

Each year, RNA has a Holiday Party at our December meeting. After an official but abbreviated meeting, everyone celebrates another year of working and living together. There is a toast to the health and happiness of all who live and work in our neighborhood. There is food and drink for all our members, neighbors and friends.

Therefore, please bring a dish of some holiday fare to share with us. But even if you can't contribute, please come to celebrate the holidays with your neighbors. Remember, the meeting is **Tuesday, December 8th at 7:30 P.M. at the Harbor View.**

HOLIDAY FOOD & TOY DRIVE

This is your last chance to contribute to the RNA annual holiday drive for food and toys for the less fortunate. Please bring your items of nonperishable foods stuffs or toys (either new or used but unbroken) to our December 8th meeting.

Cash donations will be accepted and disbursed as the donor wishes. Please call 659-2245 after 6 p.m. for other drop-off locations. These items will be given to the Salvation Army for distribution during the holiday season.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING

RNA has decided to try Christmas caroling again this year. Please join us to wish our friends and neighbors a musical holiday greeting. We will meet at the park pavilion in **Riverview-Fisk Park at 6:30 P.M. on Sunday, December 20th.** The pavilion is located on Ogden Avenue between Griffith and Bowers Streets. Dress warmly with proper clothing and footwear. Printed songsheets will be handed out, so please bring a flashlight.

If you are unable to walk with us for this holiday activity, please welcome the carolers to your house and show your appreciation with some good cheer and some hot refreshments.

COMING EVENTS

****HOLIDAY REMINDERS****

1) Party for Harbor View Residents: Thursday, Dec.17th from 1 to 3 pm

2) Christmas Caroling: Sunday, Dec. 20th, at 6:30 pm starting in Riverview-Fiske Park

RNA MEETINGS: THE SECOND TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 7:15 PM
AT THE HARBOR VIEW HEALTH CARE CENTER

A) DECEMBER 8TH MEETING
1) RNA HOLIDAY PARTY FOR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS
2) ANNUAL FOOD AND TOY DRIVE

B) JANUARY 12TH MEETING: First meeting of the new year, 1993

CONGRATULATIONS

RNA would like to formally congratulate Bret Schundler on becoming the new Mayor of Jersey City. We hope this is the beginning of a new period for our City.

Unfortunately, there has been some comment about the lack of enthusiasm among the City Council in supporting our new Mayor. RNA only hopes that our elected officials, putting aside their political differences and petty feelings, will give this man an opportunity to try out his policies and save our City from "the brink of bankruptcy."

RNA would like to extend an open invitation to our new Mayor to come and speak to our association whenever he is in the neighborhood. Our door is always open to him. We wish him the best of luck in his term and offer him our complete cooperation.

MEETING MINUTES

The November meeting was not very well attended, but was still packed with information.

Chair Maria Tuzzo opened the meeting with a few reminders about the annual holiday food and toy drive, the party for the residents of the Harbor View , and contributions to the newsletter.

The first subject discussed was a proposal to revive Christmas caroling in our neighborhood. The date chosen was Sunday, December 20 at 6:30 pm.

Next, there was an update on Ferry Street. Residents near the street had complained of garbage and neglect by the City. They registered their complaints with the proper city official and the good news is - Ferry Street is now clean!

Ms. Tuzzo reminded everyone that she has recyclable leaf bags from the JCIA. Please call 659-2245 to make arrangements to pick some up.

Poor mail delivery on Ogden Avenue was the next issue. Treasurer Jack Rea explained that our local post office blamed our mail carrier, Karen, for failing to deliver RNA's newsletter to half of Ogden Avenue last month. In an open discussion on the issue, various members noted that the Hudson City Post Office Building is inadequate, and does not allow for organized mail delivery; that the US Postal Service itself is disorganized at all levels, and is trying to cut spending by not hiring full-time mail carriers; and that despite many efforts over the years to get improved mail delivery, nothing seems to have helped. So, it was decided to create a form letter which RNA members could sign and mail to the US Postal Service in Newark. The form letter appears in this newsletter on page 5.

Another subject of great concern was the news that the Palisade Avenue A & P store will be closed when a new A & P is eventually built on Kennedy Boulevard. Although rumors of this nature have been around for years, an RNA member said she learned that closing the Palisade Avenue store is part of the company's plans. Members suggested that if it is true, RNA should do all it can to encourage another supermarket chain to open a store in the Palisade Avenue location. Further inquiries will be made to confirm this information and the date when the store will close.

On the subject of teenagers hanging around the basketball courts in the Park, a nearby resident reported that the lights on the courts are going off at 10 pm. However, the courts are still getting some light from other stanchions in the Park. It has been quieter in the Park, but the kids are still playing basketball after 10 pm. The resident asked if a police officer could come along to move the kids out of the Park after 10 pm.

Bea Higgins reported the new #86 bus to Newport Center is great, and said RNA should push NJ Transit to operate the bus on the weekends as well. Bea also suggested contacting Newport's management and have them push for weekend bus service. She also urged everyone to use the new busline, so it will be worthwhile for NJ Transit to keep the line running.

Join us att our next meeting, Tuesday, December 8th at 7: 15 pm at the Harbor View Health Center. Join us for our annual Holiday Party and bring some food or drink along if you can!

Margaret McCorry, Secretary

BEWARE: YOU COULD BE NEXT!

In the last few months, our neighborhood has come under attack from a series of robberies and burglaries. In the second week of November, Ollie Suarez of Ogden Avenue was arrested again for an attempted robbery of a store with a toy gun. This is just a the latest incident in a career that started when he was fourteen years old. He has been suspected of dealing in drugs and stolen merchandise. He was arrested a few years ago when the police raided his family's apartment and found stolen equipment. He was also caught last year burglarizing a neighbor's house. This twenty year old male has harassed and intimidated his neighbors for the past few years. RNA only hopes that he will be convicted on this latest charge and put in prison - away from our neighborhood.

The week before Thanksgiving, there was another incident. Three men, two of Palisade Avenue and one from Webster Avenue were arrested after attempting to burglarize two houses on Ogden Avenue. The police caught them as they tried to enter the second house.

These two incidents are just the most recent ones. There has been a change in the population on Palisade Avenue for the worse. Every day, there is a good chance that a person who will try to rob, burglarize, deal in drugs, illegally drink or harass someone in our neighborhood. The police are attempting to get a handle on this deteriorating situation. Our walking patrolman is covering his beat but is unable to be everywhere at once. The North District is using the Violent Crime Unit, an undercover patrol, to combat this problem. They were the officers that arrested Suarez and the group that attempted the double burglary.

What is needed from the neighborhood is a greater participation. Be more alert!. If you see someone acting suspicious on your, or your neighbor's property, call the police. Keep an eye out for unfamiliar people that are hanging around the neighborhood. Attend RNA meetings and talk about the problem with your neighbors. Attend the community relations meeting at the North District every first Monday of the month and talk to the police directly about the problem. If you have any direct knowledge, please call the **Violent Crime Unit at 547-4999**. All information will be kept confidential.

RECYCLING YOUR GREETING CARDS

Used religious, birthday, greeting, holiday, and all occasion cards are being recycled and sold again. Children of the St.Jude's Ranch for Children make new cards year round with old ones by cutting, trimming, and pasting the card fronts onto preprinted cards. They get ten cents per card: five cents is put into a savings account to use for their college education and the rest is put into a "general cottage fund" which is used for their vacations.

These used cards can be sent to the **St. Jude's Ranch for Children, 100 St Jude Street, Boulder, Nevada, 89005**. The center recommends that you only send the front portion of the card to save on the postage.

Boxed cards in packages of 10 are then sold for $6.50 each. There are three types of packages to choose from: religious Christmas cards, non-religious Christmas cards and all occasion cards (four birthday, two sympathy, two get well, and two general cards). When ordering, indicate which style you prefer, enclose a check and send to : **St Jude's Ranch for Children, P.O. Box 60100, Boulder City, Nevada, 89006-0100.**

The center is a nonprofit, nonsectarian facility, which was established in 1966 for the care of homeless children. Most of the children have been abused, neglected or battered. The center can be reached at **702-293-3131.**

Mrs. Marie Tuzzo has volunteered to collect any used cards and mail them in bulk to the center. These cards should be brought to the monthly meetings or you can contact her directly at 659-2245. In this holiday season, where everyone receives many cards, it is a good idea to contribute to this noble project.

NJ TRANSIT PUBLIC MEETINGS

NJ Transit has scheduled a series of public meetings on their proposals for a new transportation system for the Hudson waterfront. The AA/DEIS document and a summary, which will explain the alternative proposals, will be distributed to the public at these meetings. The preferred system that has the most citizen support is a environmentally-safe, light rail system that would run along the waterfront.

The meetings will all be held at 7 pm, in the evening, at the following locations:

Thursday, Dec. 10th:	**City Hall, Jersey City**
Monday, Dec. 14th:	City Hall, Bayonne
Thursday, Dec. 17th:	Town Hall, Weehawken
Monday, Jan. 4th:	Hudson Mall, West New York

The final meeting in West New York will be conducted in Spanish.

Early next year, NJ Transit will schedule separate public hearings in Jersey City and Hoboken, whereby citizens can enter their comments into the public record. For more information, call 714-4700.

CONRAD'S CORNER

Jersey City has the highest taxes of any city in the United States with a twenty percent foreclosure rate still growing. Therefore we may have to establish a tenants tax in order to pay our growing deficit or cut down on our three thousand city workers to about one thousand and eliminate many programs we can no longer afford. We will have to do something very soon to stave off bankruptcy of the remaining homeowners paying excessive taxes now.

We could get rid of our part time councilmanic form of government and replace it with a less costly commission form of government with full time directors able to keep tabs on expenses, which at present are running us right into bankruptcy.

We could have half the taxes in the Heights if we become the bedroom of New York again as we once were when we had a trolley that went down on a trestle to Hoboken in four minutes flat from Ferry Street.

Now that mile-long Conrail freight trains will no longer run along the base of the Palisades (they will bypass the area and be running along the western slope), it will free up New York Avenue as a fast direct connection from the Heights following the route of the old trolley trestle and cutting off a mile and a half run to Congress Street and then down the Plankboard to Hoboken. It will take only four minutes to the Hoboken Terminal.

If we separate the Heights from the rest of Jersey City, it can once again become the bedroom of New York with half the taxes. We no longer need to be a part of the Waterfront, which pays only 30 percent in taxes, while we pay 100 percent. We will be able to get to uptown New York faster than from Journal Square as we used to in the good old days of the trolley. It is something to consider - maybe its time has come - separating the Heights from the rest of Jersey City, which seems to be going down the drain with the Waterfront developments.

UPDATE: RIVERVIEW-FISKE PARK

During the week before Thanksgiving, the contractors were busy putting some finishing touches on the renovation of our Park. Twenty-one different kind of trees were planted in the Ogden-Palisade Avenue side of the Park. They were planted in the curbside plots, the playground, the two corner islands and the centerpiece. The contractors also installed paving bricks in the curbside plots surrounding the new and old trees.

There are some problems in the Park that are not being addressed by our Parks Department. Over one month ago, Director Rodney Hadley was informed that three of the new light fixtures were not working - two of which are in the playground. His reply has now become it is not officially his problem because the Park has still not been turned back over to the City from the contractors - but he will see what he can do.

There is also a problem with the maintenance crews in the Park. About two weeks ago, the crews gathered up the leaves on the lower walkway in about ten to fifteen black plastic bags. (I was under the impression that it was the law that all leaves should be bagged in recyclable brown paper bags.) They left the bags on the lower walkway, below the park pavilion, over the weekend. Some miscreant, probably drinking illegally in the Park at night, decided it would be a "cool thing" to throw them all over the fence. Monday morning, the bags were discovered strewn all over the Palisade cliff. The Parks Department was immediately notified.

However, as we go to press, the bags are still lying among the weeds on the Palisades. I wonder if they will ever be picked up by our Parks maintenance crew.

That brings up another problem that has yet to be addressed by our North District police. Illegal drinking has increased substantially in the Park. Evidence of this can be found any morning, as you walk on broken beer glass and among empty beer cans. It seems that our Park has once again become a drinking spot for our local drinking crowd. This crowd seems to be mainly Spanish, adolescent and anti-social. The problem is that when the police are in the Park, they neither chase these people out of the Park or, god forbid, arrest them and set an example. Anyone who has ever watched a police car in the Park, knows how disappointing it is. They park and never leave their patrolcar to check the grounds or usually they'll just drive through if they cannot "see" anything.

When RNA was negotiating with the City about the renovation, one of our top demands was that there should be increased police patrols and better maintenance in the Park. We were promised that both of these concerns would be taken care of. We only hope that the City will keep its promise.

HEIGHTS COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL

On Monday, December 7th, there will be a special meeting of the Heights Community Relations Council. The meeting will be held in its usual location: the North District Police Station, 282 Central Avenue, on the second floor. There will be the presentation of special Heights Pride Awards, along with a holiday party and refreshments. The meeting starts at 7:30 pm. All are invited.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

As voted on in the latter part of 1991, RNA's annual dues starting in 1993 will be raised to $5.00 per person. Your membership entitles you to full participation and voting rights in RNA, including the the annual election for executive officers held in February. It also entitles you to nine issues of the RNA newsletter.

Bring your dues in person to the December 8th meeting, or mail a check (made out to Riverview Neighborhood Association) to RNA, 232 Ogden Avenue, Jersey City, N.J. 07307.

SAVE OUR CITY ASSOCIATION CALENDAR

A Jersey City calendar is being offered by Save Our City Association for $6.00. The calendar features photographs of unique City locations and significant dates of our City's history. If interested contact Save Our City Association or ask Maria Tuzzo at the next RNA meeting.

THE SHARE FOOD PROGRAM

SHARE is an excellent food program. Each month you pay $13.00 to sign up and perform two (2) hours of community service. You then receive $35.00 worth of fresh fruits, vegetables, pastas and meats. No restrictions or requirements of any kind.

For more information, call 433-1815, Monday to Friday, 9 am to 4 pm.

SEND THIS LETTER TO IMPROVE OUR MAIL DELIVERY

The form letter on the opposite page is to be sent to the US Postal Service in Newark. Its purpose is to complain about our mail service.

Simply sign it and fold, tape or staple it together. Put your return address on the front. Then put a stamp on it and drop it in the mail. The US Postal Service's address is on the other side.

Please include your address after your signature, so that the US Postal Service will be able to answer you letter.

CONTRIBUTE TO OUR NEWSLETTER

RNA is soliciting material for our newsletter. We are interested in anything you as our readers are interested in. Would you like to thank someone? Maybe you would like to complain about something. How about suggestions to help improve our neighborhood or City?

There's always a recipe, whether it is a family heirloom or something you just found out about. Creative writing is always wanted - whether it is a poem, a short story or a memory about a local event or person.

Drop off your contributions in the mailbox, attached to the gate, at 232 Ogden Avenue. Mark the envelope, "RNA NEWSLETTERS."

DECEMBER

It is the month of Jingle bells, holly, mistletoe, Santa, and Christmas gifts,
The RNA Christmas Party on December 8th,
Being nice to one another - this is what Christmas is about.....So Be Good
MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL!

THIS IS A COMBINED NEWSLETTER FOR DECEMBER, 1992 AND JANUARY, 1993.

THERE WILL BE NO MAIL NOTICE FOR THE JANUARY 12TH MEETING.

NEWSLETTER STAFF

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PUBLIC NOTICE

This is the second publication of the formal proposal to expand the northern boundaries of the Riverview Neighborhood Association from Bowers Street to Congress Street on both Palisade and Ogden Avenues. (Riverview Neighborhood Association currently represents residents living on Palisade and Ogden Avenues from Bowers Street to Cuneo Place.)

Adopted: October 13, 1992

December 1, 1992

Postmaster Ferguson
U.S. Postal Service
Newark Field Division
P.O. Box 877
Newark, N.J. 07102-0877

Dear Postmaster Ferguson:

I am writing to urge you to investigate problems with delivery on the southern section of Ogden Avenue in the Heights of Jersey City (Route 28). The Hudson City branch serves this area, and has been unresponsive to complaints.

Mail delivery is erratic. One day residents get no mail, then the next day the mailbox is loaded. It seems clear that mail is not fully sorted every day. In addition, it is rare that residents on this block get store circulars and promotional literature in time to take advantage of the sales. In other words, the sale is over before anyone on this route find out about it! Furthermore, when you go to the Hudson City branch to pick up a package which requires a signature, there are times the package is misplaced. Residents are sometimes told to come back another day. This is more than inconvenient - it does not live up to the standards the U.S.Postal Service has set for delivery.

There have been numerous complaints made to the Hudson City branch officials, as well as the top postal officials in Jersey City. Usually mail delivery improves, but it never remains consistently good. In addition, it seems local postal officials are more concerned with pointing the finger of blame than finding ways to solve the problem.

Again, I urge you to step in and solve this problem. The United States is known for fast, efficient mail service. Please help the people of Jersey City's Route 28 get that same service.

Sincerely,

Postmaster Ferguson
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Newark, NJ 07102-0877

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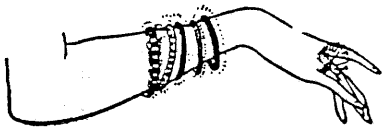

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PLEASE COME TO THE ANNUAL
RNA HOLIDAY PARTY AT OUR
NEXT MEETING ON TUESDAY,
DECEMBER 8TH

FOR A BETTER LIFE IN THE HEIGHTS

RIVERVIEW NEIGHBORHOOD
ASSOCIATION
WOULD LIKE TO WISH ALL
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NEWSLETTER

"I guess it really is true.
The holidays are running together."